

April 29, 2015

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a special meeting on this date at the Stonington Town Hall at 1:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman George Crouse and Selectmen Rob Simmons. Selectman Michael Spellman was available by telephone. Also present were members of the public and press.

**(1) Call to Order**

Mr. Crouse called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**(2) Comments from the Public**

None

**(3) New Business**

**Discuss Charter Revision Commission's Amendments to the Charter**

Mr. Crouse stated that they were here today to open up the idea if the other two Selectmen agree we want everyone to have a chance to have their voice. He stated that they are going to vote to have another hearing on May 6, 2015.

Mr. Simmons stated that he would make a motion that the Board of Selectmen extend the hearings on the Charter Revision Commission document to be held on May 6, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. to include an invitation to leadership and members of the commission, town officials effected by the recommendations and members of the public who did not get an opportunity to testify at the last hearing to be present and to speak. Mr. Spellman seconded the motion. Discussion: Mr. Simmons stated that the motion is fairly clear. He stated that we had a very good hearing the other day and numerous folks testified. Mr. Simmons stated that towards the end of the hearing, one thing that struck him was that the leadership of the CRC did not testify. Mr. Simmons stated that Bob Statchen did a great job and since then he has talked to him about some of the details of what he was saying. He stated that there was nobody there from Board of Finance and none of the town officials who are affected were there. Mr. Simmons stated that it is important as part of the orderly process of government that these folks have an opportunity to speak and we have an opportunity to ask them any questions that we may wish to ask. He stated that it is real simple and there are no ulterior motives. Mr. Crouse stated that he was very impressed with the group that made their presentations. Mr. Crouse stated that he heard most definitively that they were in support of the charter revisions. He stated that hopefully this time people will come and express their opinions also. Mr. Crouse stated that there were probably 100 people at the last hearing and 30 or so spoke and it is fine with him to do it again. Mr. Spellman stated that he is in support of bringing all of the stakeholders to the table. Mr. Spellman stated that it is part of their duty to the town to vet the process. The vote was 3-0 in favor of holding another public hearing on May 6, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Stonington High School.

**(4) Comments from the Public**

- Mr. Kevin Bornstein stated that he supports the notion of having another hearing. He stated that it was a pragmatic notion to positively invite the stakeholders. He stated that if you are making positive actions towards inviting a specific set of people that you also make positive actions to notify the town and the populous as a whole that the public hearing is happening and that you are inviting people to make comments.
- Mr. Dan Kelley asked if it was not posted before. He stated that a lot of interested parties knew about it and chose not to come. He stated he didn't know why they

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didn't show up. Mr. Kelley stated that they will do whatever it takes for the Selectmen to hear us and the general public to hear us. He stated that we will keep educating the public and get them involved as much as possible. Mr. Kelley stated let's just make sure this process moves along.

- Ms. Ashley Gillice stated that Mr. Simmons commented about the Charter Revision Commission members not speaking. She stated that she thought it was more important for the general public to have the opportunity to speak. She stated that she agrees with having another meeting in terms of democracy however, she thinks if this is what we are doing her curiosity is whether the Selectmen will do this on multiple things in the future as a public hearing when they feel that not enough people were notified.
- Mr. Simmons stated that he felt the first hearing was very helpful and very useful but the problem from his perspective is there were interested parties who were going to be affected by some of the provisions in this document for whatever reason were not there. He stated that part of their responsibility as a board is the orderly process of government takes place. Mr. Simmons stated that they have had multiple hearings for example on the POCD because there was so much interest in it. He stated that when they laid that one out, they put the government officials up front like Sara Lathrop to comment on her work product which she did. Mr. Simmons stated that other officials commented on it from their perspective and then members of the public commented. Mr. Simmons stated that we ran out of time so we kept it open for another week so everybody had a chance to speak. He stated that in this particular instance it was kind of reversed. He stated that we had a lot of members from the public but almost no public officials for some reason.
- Ms. Amy Hambly asked Mr. Simmons if at the meeting he just referred to if he asked those people to speak.
- Mr. Simmons stated that they asked that the organization that produced the document present the document.
- Ms. Hambly asked if they asked that of the Charter Revision Commission. She stated what they put forth all of the minutes of the meetings are open. Ms. Hambly stated that everybody can see them and everybody can see what they think. She stated that the minutes are extremely detailed. Ms. Hambly stated that they made sure that was the case so there wasn't anyone wondering what anyone thought. She stated that she speaks to the fact that they felt as though that was their presentation and there wasn't any need to speak to it. Ms. Hambly stated that if they were asked they would have gotten up and spoke to it. She stated that they were all there to support it. Ms. Hambly stated that she is dumbfounded by the whole thing. She stated that if someone could not make it and wanted their views known whether positive or negative they could have had that known.
- Ms. Grace Murray asked what should happen if the people you are extending the invitation to choose not to show up, will it need to be scheduled again.
- Mr. Crouse stated that his brothers in arms wanted to hear more so as a democratic person, they are going to hear more.
- Ms. Murray stated that she didn't know if there is a timeframe that it needed to be done to get on the ballot.

- Mr. Bornstein stated that they need to be complete the Monday following the next public hearing.

**(5) Comments from the Selectmen**

None

**(6) Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Kristine Bell  
Recording Secretary